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Gave Data to Soviet, Cornell Student Says

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Herald-Journal Bureau

WASHINGTON—A 28-year-old Czechoslovakia-born graduate student and instructor, at Cornell, Natalie Bienstock, has told the Justice Department she was recruited by Soviet intelligence between April, 1962, and February, 1963.

In two sworn statements, Miss Bienstock said she sent to a Soviet contact the names of agents of the Central Intelligence Agency and FBI who had some association with Russian entertainers in this country.

She said she had been asked to furnish the Soviets information about American efforts to cause defections among Russian performers visiting the U. S. under the cultural exchange program.

Miss Bienstock has not been charged with any law violation.

She also said she turned in to her Soviet contact the name of a Russian ballerina who was regarded by Miss Bienstock as "a possibly disloyal citizen of the Soviet Union."

She transmitted the information in secret writing in a series of letters addressed to Leo Sorokine at 680 Park Ave., New York, and signed in code names, according to her statements. At the time, the address was the location of the headquarters of the Soviet Union delegation to the United Nations.

During the first part of this period, she was employed as a Russian interpreter and road company secretary by Hurok Attractions, Inc., the large concert management firm in New York which handles almost all visiting Russian stage groups in this country.

Since the fall of 1962, Miss Bienstock has been an instructor in freshman Russian and a graduate student in Russian literature at Cornell University.

In her next-to-last letter to her Soviet contact, she said, she "probably" transmitted the name of an American student at Cornell who "associated with two Soviet students" attending Cornell as exchange students.

statements to the Justice Department, "I have ceased any and all activities and connections with any Soviet organization whatsoever."

Miss Bienstock told her own story in explicit detail in two statements filed with the Justice Department on Oct. 19.

One statement was filed under a law requiring registration by persons acting as agents of foreign governments or other foreign principals.

The other was filed under a little-known 1956 law requiring registration by persons trained in espionage or sabotage or receiving such an assignment from a foreign government.

Both laws provide that the registration statements are public records.

In a copyrighted interview in Ithaca with reporter Edward

W. O'Brien, she repeated the substance of the information and added many details.

In her Justice Department statements, she did not offer an explanation of why she undertook the Soviet assignment or why, as she said, she eventually terminated it.

In the interview she indicated she had been coerced, while visiting Moscow as a tourist, into agreeing to carry out the mission. She said she realizes now she should have gone to the FBI immediately on her return to New York.

The whole thing was "a mistake, a terrible mistake" on her part, Miss Bienstock said.

Miss Bienstock said she filed her recent Justice Department statements after receiving a letter from the department directing her to do so.